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sits on a stool grasping the mortar with her legs. Another method is to pound the grain in a hollow in the ground. Two women then sit opposite each other with legs apart and pound alternately, singing to keep time. Each holds a flail with one hand, and with a quick movement of the other sweeps fresh heads of millet into the hole in the ground. This last method is probably less efficient, but it is more companionable and preferred by young people. The pounding is exhausting work. The women's bodies steam in the sun and the village resounds with the regular thud of the flails.[1]

The grain has now to be sifted from the chaff (*ukuela*). Winnowing consists in sending the grain swirling with a circular motion of the big open basket (*ulupe*) which sends the chaff to the surface where it can be scooped off while the grain remains beneath. It is then pounded for a few moments again (*ukusokola*) and then winnowed again (*ukupunga*). The chaff is emptied on the garden beds around the village and to this the natives attribute the greater fertility of this land. (Cf. p. 281).

It now remains to grind the flour (*ukupela*). Against the wall of the veranda of each house is a small circular platform, about 9 inches from the ground, worn into a smooth groove with much grinding. In front of this the woman kneels, and on it she places the handfuls of grain which she grinds beneath a small stone. This task is reckoned very hard work and the women sing to lighten their labour. The rhythmic to-and-fro of the grinding stone, and the notes of a song, falling flatter and flatter, are the common sounds in a village in the late afternoon.

The flour so produced is of a coarse quality, and careful housewives sometimes grind it fresh before making the thin gruel (*umusunga*) with which a small baby is fed.[2] Some species of millet are distinguished as being easier to grind than others, and the flour is graded according to its whiteness, Kaffir-corn flour being the lightest.

To cook the porridge, the flour is merely tipped from the basket into water boiling in a big *inongo*. The process of gauging the

[1] The conception that the African woman is an overworked drudge is probably derived from the sight of the housewife threshing, but I must add that on the occasion when I was myself most overcome with pity at the sight of the women pounding millet I overheard this remark from one victim to another in reference to myself: 'I don't know how these white women stand it. I should think her neck must ache bent over her writing all the morning.'

[2] Vide, p. 69.

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881 554 463 793 present, but *banacimbusa* are rather wealthier than their fellows owing to the payments they receive, and they carry themselves with considerable dignity and circumstance.

[608] The *nacimbusa* stands in a special relationship to the girl she has initiated throughout her life. She will probably deliver the girl's first child and act as *mbosua*, or special guardian, to the baby.

881 202 576 *The messenger.* In the old days when the exchange of feasts formed a more important part of the ceremony than they do now, the *nacimbusa* was assisted by a woman known as the *nakalamba*, who was employed to invite the guests to the ceremony by rolling on the ground in front of their houses—the Bemba form of obeisance to a chief. They also fetched clay for the pottery and supervised the ritual cooking of the food.

881 584 *The candidates and their bridegrooms.* The initiation candidate is known as the *nacisungu*. As I have said, these girls were usually betrothed before the ceremony, but it was possible to carry out rites in the case of a girl who was not yet affianced. The bridegroom of a betrothed girl takes part in certain of the ceremonies under the title of *shibwinga*, and this term is also extended to the sister or cross-cousin who may replace him in certain parts of the ceremony.

881 593 604 *The relatives.* Other relatives include the girl's parents and her father's sister. The girl's mother is responsible for providing food and beer, and her father's sister is believed to have a special influence over the fertility of her paternal niece and to stand in a special relationship to her. But the ring of relatives is comparatively small. The uxorilocal family is the chief unit involved.

881 533 *The character of the rite.* The chisungu is a popular ceremony involving much dancing and singing. There is a special drum-beat characteristic of chisungu ceremonies which is frequently used at ordinary beer feasts and always used throughout the rite. Drums are beaten inside the initiation hut, and on the dancing space outside, but they are also carried wherever the women go, some miles out into the bush and back again. The singing is accompanied, as always among the Bemba, by the beat of the drums and by the clapping of hands. Some songs are peculiar to the ceremony and are necessary parts of the rite, but some can be sung at other times. All the chisungu dances are of a characteristic type. They

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the exclusion of the functions the rite performs for the individual, the role aspirant, as I have called her here.

Another device which is prominent in the chisungu is of course the mechanism of the sacred emblem and its associated formula. This ritual pattern is also very common in ceremonies intended for the passing on of roles or of systems of values. In the chisungu a series of related ideas are associated with certain symbols, the pottery figurines, and with fixed forms of words, the doggerel rhymes that are sung. This is a very interesting mechanism and one that is of very wide use in Bantu Africa as Cory and others have shown.[1] First it is evident that the designs and the pottery emblems form a sort of *aide-mémoire*. Women started to hum the songs when they saw the *mbusa*, as I observed myself when watching the making of the pottery figurines. Mrs. Culwick was told specifically by a Bena woman that the models were useful to make women remember the songs.

It became clear to me also in the course of Bemba village life that the figurines not only act as mnemonics for the songs but that they also come to represent moral attitudes and obligations and to represent them in a quotable form. I have heard a line of such a rhyme shouted by a girl's mother to an idle bride as a form of rebuke. On an occasion when a young married woman was tempted to go off to a beer-drink and leave her baby unguarded in the hut behind, an older woman suddenly shouted to her the song associated with the house *mbusa* (cf. Appendix B, No. 51). This song calls to mind the moral tale of the mother who leaves her baby alone in the house so that it falls into the fire and gets burnt. The girl in question looked irritated and impatient, and then shrugged her shoulders, gave up her project and went inside her house. In such circumstances the chisungu rhymes enable the Bemba to give formal expression to public morality. In other words the seemingly meaningless doggerel becomes a weapon. Bemba women recognize this as is shown from the comment made on the crocodile model. 'The girl will remember "that is what they taught me by the crocodile".'

[1] Cf. H. Cory, 'Figurines used in the initiation ceremonies of the Nguu of Tanganyika', *Africa*, vol. XIV, 1943–4. Such figurines also occur among the Bena. Cf. A. T. and G. C. Culwick, *Ubena of the Rivers*, 1944.

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APPENDIX B

Songs Sung During the Ceremony

The following are the songs transcribed during the ceremony witnessed. They represent little more than half of the songs actually sung and less than that proportion of the chisungu songs known by the average *nacimbusa*. The songs are given with literal translation together with the different interpretations offered. These latter are given in some detail as they show the variety of traditional meanings associated with ceremonial songs of this kind. The whole appendix illustrates the point made on p. 164 that the fixity of a form of words or a design allows multiple interpretations without losing the value associated with a 'thing handed down'. The differences in interpretation are either absolute as in the case of song No. 10 or else they are variations in crudity as between the explanations given by the uneducated *nacimbusa* or the educated Bemba. I am indebted to Mr. I. A. Nkonde for a complete set of interpretations of the latter type and for help with some of the translations, and also to Mr. Paul Mushindo and Mr. Kasonde.

No. 1. *Entering in.* This is the song sung when the girls are first brought into the chisungu hut (p. 64) crawling on all fours under blankets:

Tuingile shyani?	How are we going in?
Tuingile mipempe;	We are going in as through a tunnel into a dark place;
Nga bakolwe.	We are going in like monkeys.

Interpretation. Mipempe are the grass reeds built to form a narrow passage into the interior of a fishing weir. Hence it conveys the idea of a passage into a secret place, i.e. the secrets of the

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881 533 *mbusa*. It is also a passage concealed from the outside world as the girls are concealed from the eyes of the rest of the community under the blankets. Monkeys are represented throughout the chisungu as being enterprising in thefts, usually for the sake of the family.

The immediate interpretation given was that the song meant the hiding of the girls from the village; and that the crawling was meant to make them look ridiculous. I. A. Nkonde gives:

'How shall we go into the ceremony? Shall we enter like monkeys that crawl in in stealth? Thus we show we are forsaking the normal way of life. But we have to go through dark and difficult places before we get wisdom.'

Kasonde says:

'How shall we enter in? We shall enter exposing our buttocks like monkeys.

We are free in the house.

There is nothing secret to us.'

No. 2. Setting the Fish Traps. Sung while making imitation fish traps out of leaves (p. 65):

[539] *Ubwamba bwali bwandi!* Here is my fishing weir!
Ndetabataba no mono. I am bustling about to set a fish trap in it.

[226] *Interpretation. Ubwamba* is a fishing dyke built in mud across a backwater. The *mono* is the conical fish trap set in it. *Bwamba* also [195 831] means nakedness and hence is used as an euphemism for the sex organs. The leaf cups with which the women pretend to catch each others' fingers apparently represent the fish-traps and also the [842] vagina of the woman. Fish appear as symbols of fertility throughout the ceremony and the women mention this in immediate explanation of the relation to the words of the song, i.e. 'The mother says, "The girl was my responsibility, but I cannot teach her everything. I have tried to do so up to now but I have failed and therefore now I have to entrust her to the *nacimbusa* to carry out the ceremony for her. If she refuses it means there is no hope for my girl".'

No. 3. The Chisungu falls off. Sung after the girls have made their first jump over a faggot bundle and are carried back to the village (p. 66):

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Twakula icibwe	We have dragged a big stone down from the hills (twice)
Twakula icibwe	
Twaleta!	We have brought it in!
Cipapa cambale ico mulila	It is the skin of the leopard which makes you cry
Twakulakula!	We have dragged it and dragged it!
Twaleta!	We have brought it in!

Interpretation. The heavy stone is the weight of the chisungu, the dangerous difficult condition from which the girl is to be freed. (Cf. the expression 'the chisungu falls'—chisungu *cawa*). *Mbale* is an old term for leopard—the animal which cannot change its spots and which represents the hard new life. The leopard skin was also associated with the function of the *nacimbusa* who wore such a skin in the old days. The women explain the song as one of rejoicing that the chisungu has fallen off. Nkonde phrases it: 'We are dragging something of a problem; we have brought it in. The heavy stone is the difficulties the girls have to go through before they are called mature women.' Kasonde says: 'The *mbale* skin you have been crying for, we are dragging and dragging it in to you. We are at last bringing you the beautiful girl you have been waiting for.' Thus there are ideas as to the difficulty of the new life, the secrets to be revealed and the realizing of an object long waited for expressed in this song. The leopard represents the hardships the girls will have to face in future.

No. 4. Behold the husband as a lion. Sung after the return to the initiation hut after the first jump:

Iseni mutambe!	Come and look!
Tutwale uko bacibashyale	Let us take them for the purpose for which they were made,
Cinkolobondo.	To the *cinkolobondo.*
Napelwa na mulume ua nkalamo,	I have been given to my lion husband,
Iseni mutambe!	Come and look!

Interpretation. The *cinkolobondo* is the mortar or grinding

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X881 ● 533 trough. It is also, according to Nkonde, the tree of life. A *nacimbusa* interpreted: 'They have given the girl to the *nacimbusa*. It is the father who is the lion.' Others said that the husband was the lion. Nkonde writes: 'Behold we are bringing the girls to the place of life (the *cinkolobondo* tree).' I think also to the occupations of married life, i.e., to the mortar or grinding trough. He added 'I am given to the husband. He is no coward. He is as strong as a lion; so come and see what kind of a person my husband is!' Kasonde says: 'I am destroyed or smashed up by this male lion.'

[539] *No.* 5. *Teasing the girl.* Sung during the teasing of the girls:

Tumutemyetemye,	Let us shake her, shake her,
Mulwani uauma	The enemy has made himself hard
Mwansa Kabinga!	Mwansa Kabinga!

Interpretation. Mwansa Kabinga is a legendary character who occurs in Bemba songs. The women attempted no explanation. Nkonde writes 'Let us shake them and trouble them, for during their girlhood they behaved as though they did not know they would be liable to punishment during the chisungu ceremony, if they were rude to their elders. So now let us take revenge on them. This teaches them to bear difficulties.'

No. 6. *Honouring the nacimbusa.* Sung by a young man doing a dance of respect to the *nacimbusa* (p. 68):

[539]

Cindamo nindwala!	I dance here but I am ill;
Nai mwana ua cimbwi	I am the child of the hyena;
Namucelela shiyanga.	I have greeted the magician.

Nkonde writes: 'I cannot dance because my girls are ill. But I am hard like the hyena's child and I shall do my duty. We therefore bow our heads and greet the *nacimbusa* who has made it possible for our daughters to be initiated.' Kasonde says: 'The girl was hard and difficult to deal with and must be disciplined.'

No. 7. *The wild pig.* Sung at the root of the *musuku* during the first woodland ceremony to the action of scratching up seeds (p. 70):

[539]

Munjili,	You wild pig,
Sebe mpolo!	Hoe up the rough grass!

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Interpretation. Mpolo is wild grass. The pig gets up early to look for food and the girl is to do the same after she is married. Pigs root up food in rough ground and hence the girl must be prepared to work hard to get food for the family. Nkonde's version is 'Young girls, seek wisdom now you have entered into womanhood. The provision of food is now in your hands and you have to feed those about you and bring up the children in the manner we have taught you'.

No. 8. *The guinea-fowl.* Also sung at the root of the *musuku* tree to the action of churning up the ground:

We makanga,	You guinea-fowl,
So lindo!	Come here and wait!

Interpretation. The guinea-fowl scratchs the soil to find food, as the pig does. There is a similar emphasis on the need for looking for things instead of expecting them to lie on the surface. The guinea-fowl is also a sex symbol and appears in one of the wall-designs and as a large pottery emblem in the hut. Women said the song was to teach the girl industry. Nkonde writes: 'You are like a guinea-fowl. You have to look for things yourself. The whole world is in your hand. It is your duty to make the best of it.'

No. 9. *The little garden.* Also sung at the root of the *musuku* tree to the action of sowing seeds and scraping them up with the hands (p. 71):

Akabala,	The little garden,
Balala.	The garden of the ground-nuts.

Interpretation. This is a typical example of meaning by inference rather than in the actual word content. Women explained 'When the rain falls you hoe ground-nuts'; or 'It is to teach the girls how to garden'. Nkonde writes: 'You do not use the word garden for land that has not been dug. You cannot expect to get ground-nuts, or anything else, where you have never worked. The blood comes from a cut which means that nothing on this earth can be got without labour.'

No. 10. *The tortoise starts to climb.* A song sung while the girls are made to climb legs foremost up the *musuku* tree (p. 71):

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good housewife should. Kasonde added: 'We must eat in order to live and therefore we must be prepared to face difficulties sometimes.'

No. 13. *The order of precedence.* The song is repeated constantly when giving offerings of *mbusa* to the elders in order of precedence. (Pp. 72–3.):

Kuapa takacila kubea	The arm-pit is not higher than the shoulder.

Interpretation. As it is impossible to reverse the arm-pit and the shoulder, so it is impossible for the younger ever to reach higher status than the older.

No. 14. *Honouring with the mouth.* This was the song sung constantly when objects were picked up with the mouth instead of the hand and were offered in order of precedence.

Tolela nando,	Let me pick it up,
Tolela na mulimo,	Let me pick it up with my mouth.
Mbusa yandi.	My *mbusa.*

I have no interpretation beyond the obvious one.

No. 15. *Forward and backward.* This was the song sung when the girls crawled four steps forward and four backward. (p. 74.)

Konta kanandi	Mark one step after another!
Konta!	Mark it!
Tatubwelela pa numa.	Let us not turn back.

Interpretation. Two contradictory interpretations were given. One said that the girls must go back if they have made a mistake and must put it right, and another that the girls have entered a new world and must not turn back.

No. 16. *The Hunt on the roof.* When looking for presents on the roof of the hut the women sang: (p. 75)

Mumfwayile akasoka mu mutenge.	You look for a little snake for me on the roof.

Interpretation. The snake is the hidden thing. (See also p. 87.)

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[881 533] *No.* 17. *The bridegroom's gift.* When looking for *mbusa* in the covered baskets the women sang:

[539]

Wakunkupukwila;	You have uncovered it,
Mwalye nsomo lye.	You have eaten the whole *nsomo.*

Interpretation. The *nsomo* was the bridegroom's gift. It refers to the gifts of food given ceremonially to the bridegroom during the different stages of the marriage ceremony. These dishes have small gifts placed on top and the food must be distributed and not eaten.

No. 18. *The girls' invitation.* The girls distribute the cooked food to their fellows and sing:

[539]

Fisabo fyesu fyapwa;	The food from our gardens is finished up;
Pokeni bamayo.	Help yourselves, mothers.

Interpretation. This is the song that goes with the rite that makes the girl free to garden. The women said: 'Now we have danced the child as a gardener. She must start to cultivate herself now.'

No. 19. *Begging for fire.* This is an important song sung as the women rubbed the fire-sticks in a frenzied effort to produce sparks (p. 76):

[539]

Twaisa kulonda mulilo	We have come to beg for fire.
Nkalamo twapapata.	Lion, we beg it of you.

No. 20. They also sang:

Shikishiki!	Scratch! Scratch! (The operating of the fire-sticks)
Uafyala banga?	How many children have you borne?

[604 842] *Interpretation.* The sticks are rubbed on the back of the girl's father's sister who can give or withhold parenthood. The girl is told that she owes fire to the older woman whose hands ache from the rubbing. She must take over now. She must take her turn at the bearing of children now. The lion is the bridegroom, the chief, or the male principle throughout the ceremony. The bridegroom is

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begged for fire. The whole rite is called 'begging for parenthood'. Nkonde added that the girl is taught not to forget to keep the fire taboos.

No. 21. *Further teasing songs:*

Fitula panse,	Things from outside the house,	[539]
Te fikansa.	Cause no arguments.	

Interpretation. The girl is not to sit chatting with friends who might urge her to criticize her husband.

Many similar songs have been omitted.

No. 22. *Take the girl to the crocodile.* When showing the pottery *mbusa* to the girls, the women sing:

Mutwale umwana,	You take the girl,	[539]
Kuli yiwena.	To the crocodile.	

Interpretation. The crocodile is the royal totem and represents authority and tradition, either exerted by the chief or the husband. Nkonde suggests that if the girl does not go through the ceremony, she will not be loyal.

No. 23. *The nacimbusa adorned.* The *nacimbusa* was honoured by the song:

Bana cinyampinyampi,	The children of Cinyampinyampi	[539]
Cimbusa cikulu conda na ngala.	The great *mbusa* brought them forth with her [illegible]	

Interpretation. The children of Cinyampinyampi (a legendary figure) are brought forth by the great *nacimbusa*, the mid-wife. *Ngala* also means the plumed head-dress worn by the *nacimbusa* in the chief's court and the song refers to her honour there.

No. 24. *The stool.* The women play at chasing each other off a stool. They sing:

Mwikala pa cipuna	Don't sit on the stool.	[539]

Interpretation. This is a reference to the Bemba custom of chasing away each official burier of the chief after he has fulfilled his great

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533 office. Nkonde saw in it an instruction to young girls not to sit in the presence of their elders.

No. 25. The bat song. The women sang:

[539]

Kasusu tole nda,	Little bat pick the louse,
Leke icungulo cise	Wait for the evening to come.
Tubike muleya pambali,	We will put amorous play aside
Ubwangalilo bucili ku mtuima	While we remember things in our hearts.

Interpretation. This was said to represent the woman who goes out to hunt for lovers in the dark, which a girl should never do. She raises her skirts to expose herself, like the wings of a bat. Nkonde said that the evening is the time for play, but the housework must be done before chatting with friends.

No. 26. The hawk song. The women sang:

[539]

Mpungu yalela;	The hawk has cried out;
Akuangala.	It is in play.

Interpretation. The hawk pounces down on food without ceremony. The girl must never do this.

No. 27. Imitating our mothers. When the girls swung to and fro above a pool of water in the whitening ceremony, the women sang:

[539]

Kucilingana Lesa,	Following the ways of God
Tupashyana mayo	We imitate our mother.

Interpretation. This was explained as an imitation of an act of birth and also as teaching the girls to bathe in the river during menstruation. Nkonde added: 'It is our duty to follow God and to pass on knowledge as we had it passed on to us. We make you a mother as your mothers were to you.'

No. 28. The spotted lion. On returning from the whitening ceremony the girls sang:

[539]

Twaile sobela nkalamo yamabala.	We tracked a lion in our gardens and reported it.
Cibinda talaba.	The hunter has not forgotten.

Interpretation. Nkonde hazarded that the ceremony is like the

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spots of the lion which never change or are forgotten. You have been the victim and therefore, do not forget the instructions.

No. 29. The evil spirits:

Ndelila ku ciwa kuli mayo. — I am crying to my mother because of evil spirits.

No. 30. The groping bridegroom. On the last night the mock bridegrooms come in as blind men feeling along the walls of the hut with their hands. They sing:

Ndepalampanta kafifi, — I am groping about in the dark,
Nalwala. — I am ill.

Interpretation. The bridegrooms pretend not to see the *mbusa* of the girls. They are ashamed to come to the hut where the work has gone on. An educated Bemba wrote: 'I am outwitted. I cannot see what I am doing. I am ready for mishap.'

No. 31. The Nacimbusa triumphs. The *nacimbusa* comes in in triumph and pretends to sleep on the mat the bridegroom gives her. They sing:

Yansakasengele, — Spread the mat,
Tulale yansa. — So that we may sleep.
Banacimbusa basose, — The *banacimbusa* say,
Mwatufimba. — You have wrapped us in cloth.

Interpretation. The bridegroom pays the *nacimbusa* with a mat to hand over the secret things to the bride. The *nacimbusa* tells the bride she must accept her husband. The instructions must be given so that they are understood.

No. 32. The lion skin. The *nacimbusa* appears in the *ngala* headdress and sings:

Lupapu nkalamo ngaisa — The skin of the lion is worn
Kwa Mwamba — At the court of Mwamba.

Interpretation. The *nacimbusa* is honoured as the messenger of a great chief. The skin of a lion used to be worn by the messenger of Mwamba in the old days.

No. 33. The bridegrooms bring firewood. The bridegrooms bring

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533 firewood strapped to the backs of their young sisters. They sing (p. 106):

[539]

Kuteba taulabwela,	You have not come back from fetching firewood,
Kalombo we mushya,	Kalombo you slave,
Uko wile kuteba.	From where you went to look for the faggots.

No Interpretation.

No. 34. The shooting of the mark. The bridegrooms come with bows and arrows and shoot at a mark in the wall. They sing:

[539]

Nalonshya inama yandi,	I have tracked my game;
Taibula mwine ualasa.	I have speared one.

No. 35. The man is the peak of the house.

Cikulu mwaume muyanda;	The man is the peak of the house;
Efyo tuumfwe.	That is what we have understood.
Na banakashi abapikula cisumbe.	It is women who make the pinnacle on top of the roof.

Interpretation. The chisungu is the apex of the hut roof—a complicated part of the roof to make. The man is the mainstay and support of the house. He has to solve the most difficult problems. The man is the head of the house. Women understand how to plait the roof framework. The woman knits together the home.

No. 36. Greeting the dawn. The drunken crowd of women run round the village to greet the dawn. They sing:

[539]

Mukolobwe!	Mr. Cock!
Nga waya,	When you have gone,
Iseni tuangale.	Let us come out and play.

Interpretation. Kasonde said: 'Now that the cock has crowed let us play,' i.e. at man and wife.

No. 37. The lion song. Another chisungu song sung on the last morning was:

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Ualele cisungu,	You have slept with the chisungu child,
Ualele nkalamo.	You have slept with the lion.

Interpretation. It is dangerous to sleep with a girl after puberty. It is like the danger of the lion. The young man is warned not to sleep with his bride without the right precautions.

II

The songs that follow are those which are sung when the girl is presented with her pottery figurines.[1] The majority of the songs are given here, but omissions have been made when the meaning of the song is very obscure.

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[532]

Fig. 1. *The bracelet*

No. 38. *The bracelet* (*likosa*) Fig. 1. This is a model of a bracelet. It is put over the wrist of the girl, or else swung in her hand. The following words are sung:

[539]

Kampele mulume,	It was given me by my husband,
Akakaŋanda.	The little house.
Mayo tambene!	Mother look at it!

Interpretation. It is the husband's duty to clothe his wife and the bracelet represents this obligation. The betrothal present (*nsalamo*) is also usually a bracelet. The initiate is ritually clothed with bracelets made of grass at the end of the chisungu when she is ceremonially bathed in the river (p. 109). Hence the girl calls her mother to look at what her husband has given her, i.e. the bracelet,

[584]

[1] The collection I made for the museums of the Universities of Johannesburg and Cape Town differ slightly from that seen at Cisonde village. The former have been described by Schofield. Op. cit.

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881 533 778 and thus she hints that the time has come for her to be given to her husband. The song can apparently also be translated as 'Go and give me to my husband'.

[532]

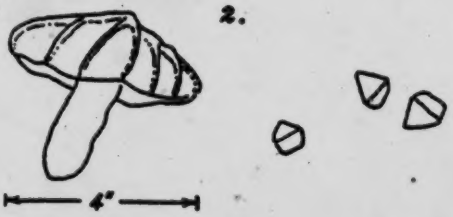

Fig. 2. The necklet beads (2 forms—one representing the whole conus shell and one the triangular discs made from it to be used as beads of a necklace).

[301] *No. 39. The necklet bead* (*mpande*) (Fig. 2). Two forms are used in the chisungu ceremonies—the whole conus shell as shown in the drawing or a triangular section such as the Bemba regularly wear as neck ornaments. There are many historical associations with such shells. They are, for instance, placed on the body of the dead paramount chief when he is buried.

In the chisungu the model of the bead, strung on bark string, was swung to and fro by the mistress of the ceremony while the company sang:

[539]

Mpande yandi,	My mpande bead,
Yapona kwi sano.	It has fallen in the chief's court.

Interpretation. There was considerable unanimity in explanation here. Informants all agreed that the *mpande* represented the wife. If the husband has wronged his wife so that she runs back to her own family, then he has lost his head. To get his wife back he must approach his relatives-in-law with great circumspection and must bring presents as he would if he had let something fall in a chief's courtyard. This is a typical example of the allusive use of a couple of doggerel lines to refer to a marriage obligation. The *mpande* shell is also used as a vagina symbol in some parts of Africa. This meaning was not specifically mentioned to me by Bemba informants.

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No. 40. *The star* (*ntanda*) (Fig. 3). This is a big pot with a narrow mouth and perforated sides. A lighted taper is put inside so

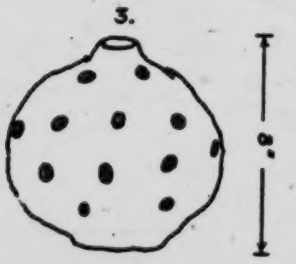

Fig. 3. *The Star* (*with perforations so that a lighted taper will burn inside*).

that it shines out to represent star-light. A pottery lid is then fitted on top and the initiated girl must balance it on her head, if possible with the torch remaining alight inside. The company sings:

Ulekashye ntanda bushiku;	You gaze at the stars at night;
Ulantuka ukashika.	You revile me obscenely.

Interpretation. Here there seems to be a complicated double meaning, and probably more than two. Women answered questions about this figurine with shame and hesitation. They said that the light which shone through was the blood inside the woman, which it is so terrible to display. *Ukashika* is to be grave, weighty but also to become red. The most horrible curse a man can use is to swear by the menstruation of his wife. It is a thing which a woman can hardly bring herself to whisper in explanation. The surface meaning is, however, given cheerfully. However badly a husband swears at his wife, she must not answer back. This is a typical example of words with a readily repeatable meaning and concealed associations known as 'things underneath' (*fintu fya panshi*).

No. 41. *The little spoon* (*kakombo*) (Fig. 4). The initiate stands opposite the 'bridegroom' on the last night of the ceremony.[1] She pretends to pour water on 'his' hands with the model of the spoon

[1] Represented by his sister.

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and to rub the floor beneath as though she were muddying it over. All sing:

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Cibale! Cibale!	Cibale! Cibale!
Kasambe mulume,	Go and wash your husband,
We cinangwa!	You ignorant (uninitiated) creature!
Na panshi ulala (*or utota*),	And to the ground make obeisance,
We cinangwa!	You ignorant creature!
Cibale! Cibale!	Cibale! Cibale!

[532]

Fig. 4. The Spoon.

Interpretation. Here the meaning was clear and the actions representative. The girl here imitates in song her part in the ceremony of purification after intercourse. She takes water from her little marriage pot and pours it on her husband's hands. The initiated girl knows how important it is to do this but not the girl who is a weed, or an uncultivated plant, because she has not been danced. Cibale is a legendary figure.

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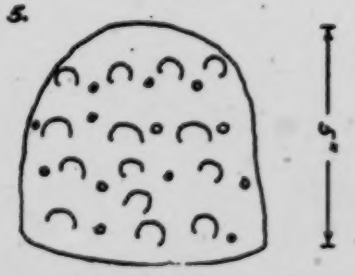

Fig. 5. The man with the plumed head dress worn on the 'bridegroom's' head.

No. 42. The man with the plumed head-dress (*waume ua ngala*) (Fig. 5). This helmet-like model was worn by the female represen-

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tative of the bridegroom, who balanced it on her head while the girl was washing her hands as above. They sing:

Mwansa Cembe!	Mwansa Cembe! (twice)
Mwansa Cembe!	
Mulume wa ngala waisa.	The husband with the plumed head-dress has come.

Interpretation. Mwansa Cembe is a legendary figure in whom no one seemed to show much interest. The song itself was sung with great excitement (see p. 86). The husband comes wearing the plumed head-dress which was given by the chief to brave warriors. He comes in triumph. The girl kneels to him. 'It is to show honour to the husband. The girl must praise him.'

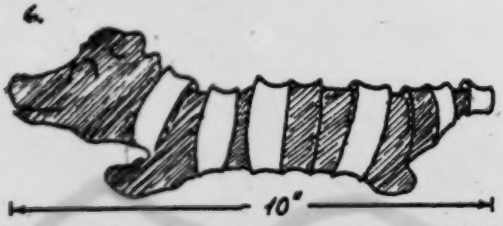

Fig. 6. *The crocodile* (*the tail was here broken off in firing*).

No. 48. *The crocodile* (*yweno*) (Fig. 6). The girl holds the crocodile figurine in her hand and the company sing:

Luyamba,	Crocodile,
Uikata ku matete.	You have caught in the rushes.
Nani shyaleka ku matete?	Who has been left in the rushes?
Luyamba.	Crocodile!

Interpretation. The crocodile, for which *luyamba* is an archaic term, is the emblem of the royal clan. There seem to be varied, or else obscure, meanings attached to this *mbusa*. One woman said it was given the girl 'to honour the chief'; another that it was to teach her not to dally by the river at night. An educated man said that the song meant that the husband is a member of the royal crocodile clan, i.e. a chief, since he provides everything for the home and is the protector. The rushes are the offences which a woman may commit by breaking the marriage vow on revealing

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the secrets of the home. The young woman must look out for the husband who may be waiting like a crocodile to seize her.

No. 44. *The garden mound* (*mputa*) (Fig. 7. See also p. 97). This figurine was balanced on the girl's head while the company sang:

Mwibala,	Through the garden,
Teti mupite muntu,	No man must pass,
Nga apita ni muka mwaume.	If it is the wife of the man who has passed.

Interpretation. Here again, we have multiple meanings and, to the European at least, great obscurity. The model is a representation of the round garden mounds which it is specifically the woman's duty to cultivate. One informant said glibly, 'No one

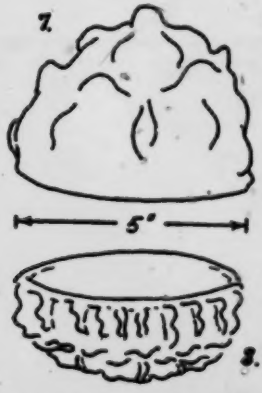

Fig. 7. *The garden mound.*
Fig. 8. *The garden.*
Both used in the second woodland ceremony.

must take a woman's garden.' But the *mputa* represents a cultivated and owned place, e.g. a chief's garden in which it is tabooed to have sex intercourse. 'The married woman is like a garden through which a man should not pass when he knows the girl is someone else's wife. If others respect his wife, he should do the same to theirs.'

No. 45. *The gardens* (*Amabala*) (Fig. 8. See also p. 96). This is one of the *mbusa* carried out into the bush for one of the cere-

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monies (p. 92). The women dance round it after a rite centring round the offering of the different seeds of the tribe to the elders in order of rank. 881X 533 778

Interpretation. I have no song and no satisfactory interpretation. Women said the *mbusa* was shown to the girl to teach her to garden.

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Fig. 9. The Clan. (The basket which is swung in a girl's hand, while the man's family is the crown worn on her head.)

No. 46. The clan (mukoa) (Fig. 9). This is a model of a basket with a handle. The girl swings it by one hand while she balances on her head a pot shaped like a helmet, as shown in Fig. 5. The company sing:

Cupo asenda pa mutwe;	She carries her marriage on her head; [539]
Uaseshya mukoa.	Her clan is dangling in her hand.

Interpretation. There seemed to be no difficulty about this *mbusa*. Informants told me at once that since the girl was married she had to put her in-laws in a place of honour above the members of her clan, i.e. on her head; the clan relatives must be swung below in the girl's hand.

No. 47. The hoe (lukasu) (Fig. 10). The girls pretend to be hoeing a garden. They sing: 881X 533 778 539

Nimpa kalonde.	Give me my little hoe (archaic).
Ndea ku mabala.	I go to the gardens.
Kabala kalala.	The little gardens of the ground-nuts.

or

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Nimpa kalonde. — Give me my little hoe,
Nsebaule kongwe. — So that I can make ready the hymen.

Mulume wamona. — You have seen your husband.

[532]

Fig. 10. *The Hoe.*

[196] *Interpretation.* Here is a good example of different layers of meaning. First the initiate is to work hard at hoeing. Another rational explanation was that the girl was to be taught how to hoe when pregnant without hurting herself. Then a woman said, with a gesture and a wink, the girl would be hoed up by her husband as the ground is. The second of the two rhymes has a frankly sexual meaning—the girl wants to be given to her husband.

[532]

No. 11. *The egret* (*nkoba*) (*the white bird associated with the magic of whitening or cleansing*).

No. 48. *The egret* (*nkoba*) (Fig. 11). The company sings:

We kakoba! We koni! — You little egret! You bird!
Shimwalaba mpemba. — Do not forget the whitewash.

or

Nkoba yandi yapwa, — My digging stick is finished;
Yalobela mwibala. — It is lost in the garden.

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Interpretation. There is a play on words here. *Nkoba* is the white bird to which the girl is likened during the ceremony of the whitening magic. The *nkoba* is also a small digging stick used as a rake.

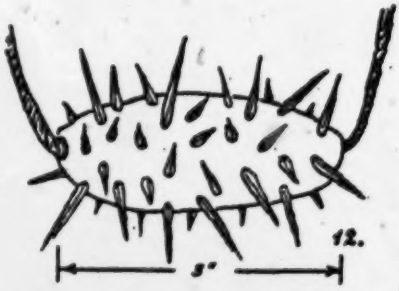

Fig. 12. *The porcupine (worn round the girl's neck to prick her if she did wrong before her initiation).*

No. 49. *The porcupine* (*chinungi*) (Fig. 12). This is a small rod of clay stuck with spines and threaded with string. It is put round the neck of the girl like a necklace and she has to swing it to and fro so that the spines prick her on the breast and neck. They sing.

Cinungi posa matamba, Porcupine throw the waves (spines)
Kulya twalilwa na mubemba. We are benighted by the lake.

Interpretation. It was supposed that the girl who had deceived her bridegroom was hurt by the spines, and that this showed her what her husband would do to her when she was married. Nkonde comments: 'Wrongs are never hidden. They come to light one day.'

Fig. 13. *The tortoise.*

No. 50. *The tortoise* (*fulwe*) (Fig. 13). The women jog up and down and mime a tortoise putting its head in and out. They sing:

Fulwe pa fyakwe, The tortoise when it is at home,
Aingishya mukoshi; Puts in its head;
Mu cifwambaka. Into its shell.

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Interpretation. You know the kind of woman who is reticent about food in her own house for fear she may have to distribute it; that is to say she puts her head under her shell. But when she is in other people's houses she puts out her head and looks into this pot and that so that she may get offered food. The girl must be hospitable.

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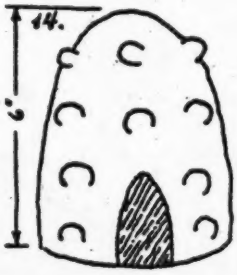

Fig. 14. *The house* (*used with a miniature door of reeds which pulls in and out*).

No. 51. *The house* (*yanda*) (Fig. 14). This is an ingenious model. It has a loose door made of reeds which pulls in and out on a string while the accompanying song is sung:

[539]

Mwana alelila,	The child is crying,
Nshisalile uko alele,	I did not see where it lay.
Tandabula.	The door is swinging.

Interpretation. This song seemed to point an important moral. Women told me impressively that it was to teach the girl how to look after her baby. The child referred to in the song is crying because the door is left swinging, i.e. it is open because the mother has gone to a beer-drink and left her baby alone. (*Kutandabula* also means to chatter.)

No. 52. *The mortar* (*kabende*) (Fig. 15). The initiate is given a pestle and made to imitate the pounding of grain and to sing:

[539]

Kabende kandi,	My little mortar,
Kamekelo.	I will show it off.

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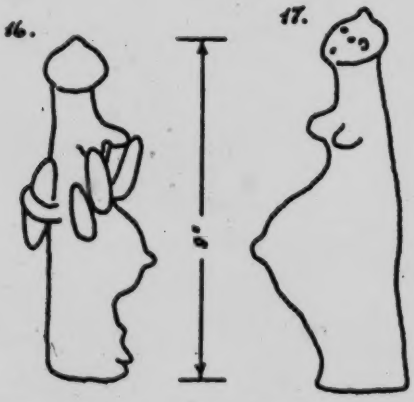
Fig. 15. *The mortar.*

Interpretation. The woman is to pound grain quickly for her husband and not slowly as she did when she was a girl.

No. 53. *The nursing mother* (*Coshi wa yoma*) (Fig. 16). The mother is pregnant and is shown carrying four babies at the same time, one at her breast and three at her back. This model was thought exceedingly funny by the Cisonde women. They sang:

Mayo alembepa!	My mother deceived me!
Coshi wa yoma!	Coshi ua yoma!
Kanshi uambepafye;	So you just deceived me;
Naimita umusuku.	I have become pregnant again.

[539]



[532]

Fig. 16. *The nursing mother* (*Coshi wa yoma*).
Fig. 17. *The pregnant woman.*

Interpretation. Coshi wa yoma was a midwife of legendary fame and is merely addressed in this song. The girl complains because her mother told her to wean her first child too soon so that it died;

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881 533 778 or alternatively told her that she would take the first child if her daughter had a second one. But she was tricking her and now the girl has two babies to look after. The moral stressed is the duty of refusing intercourse with the husband before the baby is weaned, [862] i.e. at the second or third year. This is the common Bemba practice.

No. 54. *The pregnant woman* (*mwanakashi*) (Fig. 17). The song is:

[539]

Kasuba kawa;	The sun has set;
Kasuba kaeli aya.	The sun has already gone.
Nshiku shyafula;	The days are fulfilled;
Kanshindama musuku ila.	Let me go and honour the *musuku* tree.

Interpretation. The *musuku* tree bears fruit and stands for fertility. The pregnant woman is also wrapped in its bark. Nangoshye explained the song by saying, 'the days are over; my time has come to give birth.'

No. 55. *The man who is a fool.* This is a model of a low helmet-shaped pot which the candidate puts on her head singing:

[539]

Mwe mwaume,	You man,
Shiwawela-e!	You are a fool!
Ntunta mutima.	You have no courage.

Interpretation. The man should look after his wife but he does not do so.

No. 56. *The young man walking smartly.* This is a figure of a jaunty young man all dressed up. The song is:

[539]

We kalumendo!	You little young man!
Shicenda mukola!	Who walks so smartly!
Baisa.	They have come.

Interpretation. This was said to be the son-in-law who has gone to get hoes for the marriage; or alternatively, in modern idiom, who has gone to work for the Europeans. One informant said that the song implied that the dressed-up man idling about the village does not always get the bride he wants; another that the girl has insisted on marrying the smart young man but he has gone away and left her.

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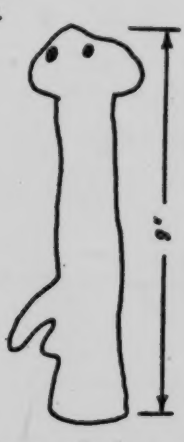
No. 57. *The man without arms. Cilume ca ciboa* (Fig. 18). This is the man with an enormous male organ but no arms. He lazes about the house finding fault with his wife, but he does not do any work or sit with his fellows making nets or baskets in the men's shelter. The husband who 'just sits' seems to be comparable to the *cipuba*, the girl who takes no pride in her domestic duties and knows nothing (p. 88).



*No.*18. *The lazy man who has no arms to work.*

No. 58. *The lion* (*mundu*) (See pp. 106, 129). This is the largest and most elaborate of the *mbusa*. One of the projections at the side is hollow so that a roaring noise is made by blowing down it. It is used on the last day of the ceremony to imitate the roaring of the lion which is likened to the husband.

No. 59. *The pipe* (*pipee*). The women pretend to smoke like Europeans do.

The girl is told she is not to smoke all day and to neglect her duties.

No. 60. *Sonsa nkalamo.* This is a model like a tree with clay projections on it. The song tells the woman to run in answer to a summons or to be obedient to her husband, according to men informants. Women, on the other hand, say that it tells the husband to honour the wife!

No. 61. *The hearthstones* (*amafwasa*). The girl stands on this initiation hearthstone and pretends to balance a pot on it.

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Some informants said the girl was to be taught cooking; and others that the hearthstones represented the settled married life.

No. 62. *The pot* (*mutondo*). The girl is to carry water and look after the house.

No. 63. *The cardinal bird* (*kabangula*). This is a small white bird with red spots on it. It represents the *nacimbusa*, since it has a red crest like the plumes of the *nacimbusa* in old days.

No. 64. *The hyena* (*cimbwi*). The girl is told not to steal like the hyena.

No. 65. *Cibone Musuba*. This is a conical-shaped model covered with small projections.

It is said to represent a tree and it is also the name of the beautiful head-wife of a legendary chief. The husband is to look upon his wife as the most beautiful of all women just as the chief preferred his head-wife to all others.

No. 66. *The centipede* (*congolo*). This is an animal about six inches long like an enormous caterpillar, which appears with the rains. The *congolo* has many legs.

The song warns the girl to perform purification after twins; or, according to another account, she is warned not to have intercourse too frequently or she will have twins—multiple births like the many legs of the caterpillar.